

Elected Officials

“I’m proud to support Sen. Harris’ effort to address the unacceptable disparity in maternal treatment faced by black women. It’s imperative that we reverse this pattern of racial bias by adequately training incoming medical professionals. We simply cannot sit back and allow the death of more women and mothers of color.” — **Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa**

“For too long, Black mothers who have raised concerns about their pregnancies have been ignored by their healthcare providers. It’s unthinkable that a black woman in America is 3 to 4 times more likely to die from a pregnancy related cause than a white woman. As a nation, we need to address the implicit biases that exist in our healthcare system to combat these outcomes. That is why I support Senator Kamala Harris’ Maternal CARE Act.” — **Assemblymember Susan Talamantes Eggman**

“It is inexcusable that in 2019, black women in America are 3 to 4 times more likely to die of complications related to pregnancy. Once again, Senator Harris is using her office to focus on an issue that is too often ignored, but one that we must address.” — **Mayor Michael Tubbs, City of Stockton**

“I applaud Senator Harris for her leadership introducing the Maternal Care Access and Reducing Emergencies Act and prioritizing health equity for woman of color. We must take proactive steps to tackle racial and ethnic disparities in women’s health. Through the leadership of the First 5 Commission, Sacramento has made a significant strides in addressing the disparity between black infant deaths and other ethnic groups. It’s only prudent to ensure that we support the mothers of these children and provide the health services needed to improve maternal healthcare and outcomes.” — **Sacramento Vice Mayor Eric Guerra**

“As a mother and a County Supervisor representing one of the poorest areas in our country, I have seen firsthand the injustice that black mothers face and know that we must address the persistent biases in our health system. That is why I support Senator Kamala Harris’ Maternal CARE Act.” — **Leticia Perez, Supervisor, County of Kern, Fifth District**

“As a Councilwoman of the 5th largest city in California, I am proud to support Senator Harris’ Maternal CARE Act of 2019. When we see that black women are 3 times as likely to die during childbirth, we must act and act now.” — **Esmeralda Soria, Councilmember, City of Fresno**

Medical Professionals

“African American women in America are three to four times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women. As an African American mother, physician, and hospital leader, I greatly appreciate and support Sen. Harris’s leadership on this critical issue.” — **Dr. Elaine Batchlor, CEO, Martin Luther King Community Hospital**

“We are living in a developed country and to have maternal mortality at the rate that it is today, in this country is frankly, embarrassing with it worsening over decades instead of improving

despite advanced technology. The racial disparities that exist are more than alarming and addressing it on a large scale is long overdue. While we applaud attempts on local levels to intervene, these unacceptable rates of death demands support, multi-dimensional approaches and collaboration which can begin to take root with the Maternal CARE Act proposed by Senator Harris. We need to continue and increase the efforts to save our mothers. No family should lose their mother from childbirth in this day and age.” — **Dr. Leita J Harris, Gynecologist, Nurturing You Women's Health & Wellness, Inc.**

“Compared to women of other races, Black women experience significant disparities in quality of pregnancy and postpartum care resulting in higher rates of injury and death from pregnancy-related causes. It is long past time that Congress addresses these maternal health disparities. The Maternal CARE Act of 2019, sponsored by Senator Kamala D. Harris, will promote health equity for Black women by providing federal funds for health care provider implicit bias training and demonstration projects for pregnancy medical homes. I strongly support this much needed first step to improving access to high quality pregnancy, birth, and postpartum care for Black women and their infants.” — **Leigh Ann Simmons, Ph.D., M.F.T., Professor and Chair, UC Davis**

“As a doctor who delivers babies and cares for people throughout their reproductive life journey, I have personally witnessed many women endure pregnancy-related complications. While we talk about Black women having a three to four higher incidence of maternal mortality than White women, the problem is not race, it is structural and institutional racism. While there are structural factors that may contribute to these disparities such as housing and food insecurity, unemployment, and poverty, it is our biases as providers that must be addressed to ensure improved patient safety. Senator Harris's Maternal CARE Act of 2019 will address our implicit biases via a training course so we may better understand the intent and impact of our microaggressions to allow for both equality and equity of health care delivery.” — **Pratima Gupta, MD MPH**

“The racial inequity in rates of maternal morbidity and mortality is truly a national embarrassment, one in which we have failed to make a dent. As a Black high-risk obstetrician long interested in inequities as clinical, research and health policy concerns, I am acutely aware of the support we need to undo the systemic and institutional racism that have brought us to this point of health care injustice. Senator Harris’ Maternal CARE Act of 2019 will deliver tools to move toward our goal, providing training for providers in the implicit biases we all carry and which limit our ability to reach true equity of health care provision. I am also enthusiastic about the bill’s provision for creation of Pregnancy Medical Homes: the legacy of the detrimental social determinants of health that many women of color face often leaves health care fragmented and difficult to navigate. Integrating and co-locating vital services holds great promise in improving outcomes and leveling the playing field for underserved women and their families.” — **Allison Bryant, MD MPH, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Massachusetts General Hospital and Associate Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Biology Harvard Medical School**

“I’m really glad the Senator Harris is reintroducing the Maternal CARE act. It is one of many essential bills to resolve health disparities and to move us closer towards health equity. I would like to see a prioritization of all health professions specifically since evidence has been shown that midwives and doulas are essential interventions in and of themselves so I would hope that the demonstration projects (which is the larger part of funds if approved) would include those health professions.” — **Monica R. McLemore PhD, MPH, RN, Assistant Professor, Family Health Care Nursing Department, University of California, San Francisco**

Community Leaders

“All mothers deserve the same dignity and maternal care regardless of where they come from or their race. African American mothers have struggled too long with a health system that is unjust and must be reformed. Senator Kamala Harris’ Maternal CARE Act will bring these necessary reforms and I am proud to support it” - **Pastor DJ Criner, Senior Pastor, Saint Rest Baptist Church, Fresno, CA**

“WEAVE supports the Material Care Act introduced by Senator Harris. As the primary provider of domestic violence services in Sacramento County and sole Rape Crisis Center, we see firsthand the impact of racial health disparities and the consequences of these, and inter-related, disparities.

We support Senator Harris' efforts including establishing grant programs to implement implicit bias training in healthcare training programs and to create a pregnancy medical home demonstration project. Both are important steps in bringing addressing the existing disparities and working towards equity in maternal health services.” — **Beth Hassett, CEO of WEAVE**

“As a longtime leader in the African American community, I have seen firsthand the injustice that black mothers face in regards to maternal care. Senator Kamala Harris’ Maternal CARE Act of 2019 will finally address these injustices and I am proud to support her legislation” — **Dezie Woods Jones, CA State President and CEO, Black Women for Political Action**

“As a leader in the African American community in one of the poorest areas of our nation, I know the injustice black mothers face when it comes to maternal care. Senator Kamala Harris’ Maternal CARE Act will provide hope and equity to black mothers and I am proud to support it.” — **Bobbie Wartson, Director, Kings County Commission on Aging**

“PPMM is proud to support this meaningful action to combat racial discrimination in maternal care that often leads women of color to have unsafe pregnancies, resulting in a public health crisis that has been overlooked for far too long.” — **Liz Figueroa, Vice President of External Affairs for CA & NV, Planned Parenthood Mar Monte**

“The Maternal Care Act is another critical step toward truly addressing what African American Women experience throughout their pregnancy journey. We cannot continue to look at the data that clearly highlights disproportionate health outcomes without ensuring there are real achievable and evidence based solutions. Senator Harris's bill provides just that and will elevate the focus where it needs to be... keeping our mothers and babies alive.” - **Kellie Todd, Sistallect,**

Inc., publisher of The State of Black Women in California Report & Chair of the Board, California Black Health Network

“As a single African American woman raising 2 children I completely support the Maternal CARE Act. I don’t want my daughter to have to experience what I have when it's time for her to become a mother herself.” — **Tamara Walton, Her Health First**

“I commend Senator Harris for introducing the Maternal CARE Act, which focuses on reducing racial disparities in maternal health,” said Shantay Davies-Balch, a maternal and child health expert from the Central Valley. “Our nation is facing a crisis in maternal health, and mothers are paying the price with their lives. This is a complex problem, and it requires an equally sophisticated solution. Senator Harris’ bill, the Maternal CARE Act, is an important piece of a multi-faceted solution to high maternal mortality rates. We must expose and address implicit bias as a critical step to the delivery of quality health care to every woman. Integrated care through pregnancy medical homes and new resources for implicit bias training are vital steps to addressing racial disparities in maternal health.” — **Shantay Davies-Balch Maternal and Child Health Leader/Advocate, Fresno, CA**

“Currently, the United States is the most dangerous place for a woman to give birth in the industrialized world, and for Black women, that number is 4 times as high. Research has shown that many of these pregnancy-related deaths and severe injuries are preventable with tools we already have, but have yet to implement. The Maternal Care Act, introduced by our Senator, Kamala Harris, is critically important in addressing the systemic issues in perinatal care that connects how implicit biases can impact the quality of care for many women. The time for action is now. Women deserve to experience a safe and dignified pregnancy and childbirth and the Maternal Care Act gets us that much closer to that goal.” — **Nourbese Flint, Executive Director, Black Women for Wellness Action Project**

“At Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest we understand that there are many barriers that can get in the way of people accessing safe and affordable health care. When it comes to Black women, who are often dismissed by the health care system due to racial bias, the barriers in accessing care can mean life or death. We stand with Black women and we support policies that address maternal health for marginalized communities. Thank you to Senator Harris for introducing the Maternal CARE Act, which will help to address the health disparities that Black women often face.” - **Nora Vargas, Vice President of Community and Government Relations, Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest**

“The Maternal CARE act will establish crucial training and programs to in order to reduce racial health disparities in maternal care. This bill is the first step in achieving health equity for new and expecting mothers, and in particular, women of color resulting in positive health outcomes for all.” — **Kevin Mattson, president and CEO, San Ysidro Health**